

## Resolution Opposing Big Money in Politics Fact Sheet

### Summary:

This resolution calls on the [insert party name here] to support public campaign finance reform solutions such as matching funds, tax credits, or small-dollar vouchers.

### The Problems:

**Wealthy Elite Drowning out the Voices of Everyday Americans** – Current campaign finance laws allow unlimited and undisclosed donations. Political contributions, which totaled \$7.1 billion in the 2012 election cycle, were joined by Super PACs and other third party entities. The law currently allows unlimited, undisclosed donations from any source. This is particularly troubling because the top 1% of donors accounted for 67% of the donations (Center for Responsive Politics). Moreover, the average net worth for a member of Congress in 2011 was \$7.9 million (as per Open Secrets). This is proof that the ultra-wealthy have much more power in our political system than the average American citizen. This opens the door for corruption. Public campaign financing will help to close that door and return American democracy to the American people.

**Special Interest Domination of Politics** – All candidates are spending an increasing amount of their time fundraising at the expense of the job they were elected to do. As a result of the Supreme Court's decision on *Citizens United vs. FEC*, members of Congress are more beholden to the special interests that disproportionately fund their campaigns. Public campaign financing will help elected officials be more responsive to the majority of the people and less to the wealthy and special interest groups.

### The Solutions:

- **Give Average Americans a Voice**
  - Public campaign finance initiatives like vouchers and matching fund systems will help give average Americans a chance to compete against the ultra-wealthy. These reforms allow Americans, regardless of economic background, to compete alongside each other on equal footing, seeking to help lead the nation we all belong to.
- **Take Back Control from Special Interests:**
  - The Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United* to allow unlimited political spending by corporations and unions has resulted in an unprecedented amount of money being injected into our political process. Public campaign finance can force candidates to agree to restrictions on contributions and expenditures in order to receive public campaign finance vouchers or matching funds.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matching funds systems force candidates to agree to expenditure limits and enhanced disclosure requirements in return for having their small donations matched based on a certain ratio. For example, this system has been used successfully in New York City where candidates receive matching funds in amounts “up to \$175 of each contribution at a six-to-one ratio.” See generally, ANGELA MIGALLY AND SUSAN LISS, THE BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE, SMALL DONOR MATCHING FUNDS: THE NYC ELECTION EXPERIENCE <http://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/Small%20Donor%20Matching%20Funds-The%20NYC%20Election%20Experience.pdf> (2010).

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